United Nations

A/59/412

General Assembly

Distr.: General
5 October 2004

Original: English

Fifty-ninth session
Agenda item 153
Financing of the United Nations Operation in Burundi

Proposed budget of the United Nations Operation in Burundi for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Proposal submitted by the Secretary-General for 2004/05	$333,174,000[a]
Recommendation of the Advisory Committee for 2004/05	$329,714,400

[a] Includes commitment authority of $106,334,600 for the period from 1 July to 31 October 2004 (see para. 3 below).

I. Introduction

1. **The recommendations of the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 11, 14, 21, 28 and 29 below would entail a reduction of $3,459,600 to the proposed budget for the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB) for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005 (A/59/300). The Committee also makes a number of observations and recommendations with regard to the administration and management of the Mission and opportunities for further savings (see paras. 22, 23, and 26 below).**

2. The documents used by the Advisory Committee in its consideration of the financing of ONUB are listed at the end of the present report.

II. Information on financial aspects relating to the period 2004/05

3. The General Assembly, by its resolution 58/312 of 18 June 2004, granted ONUB commitment authority of $106,334,600 for the maintenance of the Operation

04-53727 (E) 071004

during the period from 1 July to 31 October 2004. The full amount of the commitment authority of $106,334,600 has been assessed on Member States.

4. The Advisory Committee was informed that, as at 28 September 2004, the incumbency for ONUB was as follows:

	Authorized (interim budget)	*Encumbered*	*Vacancy rate (percentage)*
Military observers	200	183	8.5
Military contingents	5 450	4 318	20.8
Civilian police	120	45	62.5
International staff	442	231	47.7
National staff	426	151	64.5
United Nations Volunteers	191	73	61.8

III. Proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005

A. Mandate and planned results

5. The mandate of ONUB was established by the Security Council in its resolution 1545 (2004) of 21 May 2004. To implement the Security Council's mandate, ONUB will undertake a number of activities grouped into the components of the Operation's results-based budgeting framework for the period 2004/05, namely: political process, security sector reform, security environment, human rights and humanitarian assistance, as well as a support component.

6. **The Advisory Committee welcomes the efforts of the Operation to present the proposed budget in the results-based budgeting format. The Committee is of the view, however, that there is room for further improvement, particularly as regards the measurability of indicators of achievement and outputs. The presentation of external factors also needs further refinement, since most of them concern only the availability of voluntary contributions by donors. Moreover, the Committee is of the view that the output "Quick-impact projects" of component 1, "Political process", should be more appropriately included under component 4, "Human rights and humanitarian assistance", given that these projects fall under the category of humanitarian assistance (see also para. 32 below).** The Committee also points out that quick-impact projects are coordinated by staff of the Office of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for humanitarian and development coordination (see A/59/300, para. 19).

7. The proposed structure of ONUB is discussed in detail in paragraphs 16 to 21 below. As presented, the proposed structure provides for the Operation to be headed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General at the USG level, assisted by a Principal Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Governance and Stabilization and a Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, both at the ASG level, and the

military operations to be headed by a Force Commander at the D-2 level. The Operation will be supervised and controlled from a single integrated headquarters in Bujumbura and will have five regional offices.

B. Resource requirements

8. The Secretary-General's proposed budget for ONUB for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005 amounts to $333,174,000 (gross). The proposed budget incorporates and supersedes the budgetary proposals for the period from 1 July to 31 December 2004 set out in the report of the Secretary-General of 21 May 2004 (A/58/802).

9. The proposed budget provides for the deployment of 200 military observers, 5,450 contingent personnel, 120 civilian police, 403 international staff, 423 national staff and 172 United Nations Volunteers.

1. Military and police personnel

10. The estimated requirements of $143,391,700 under military and police personnel reflect a delayed deployment factor of 5 per cent in respect of military observers and civilian police and 3 per cent in respect of military contingents. The Advisory Committee was informed that the deployment of military and police personnel had been gradually improving and that the Operation would achieve 98 per cent deployment of its military and police personnel by 31 December 2004.

11. The estimated requirements of $143,391,700 under military and police personnel include a provision of $14,075,100 for rations, based on the daily rate of $6.40 per person for basic rations. The Committee notes in this connection, that the rates for rations and bottled water used for the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) are $4.74 and $5.98, respectively, for the period 2004/05. **The Advisory Committee requested clarification with regard to the rates used in estimating the cost of rations and was informed that, based on the current contracts for the provision of dry, fresh and frozen rations, inclusive of warehouse management, distribution, bottled water, provision of containers and provision of reserve ration packs, requirements for the military contingents are now estimated at $13,980,700, a reduction of $94,400.**

12. The Advisory Committee was informed that some troops had been arriving in the area of operation without sufficient equipment and required additional efforts on the part of the administration, as well as cooperation from fully equipped contingents to bridge the gap. The Mission also faced difficulty in recruiting a sufficient number of civilian police at the early stage of the operation. **While the situation has improved, according to the clarification received by the Committee, it is of the view that these earlier problems should be analysed, conclusions drawn and lessons learned to be applied to other similar situations.**

13. The Advisory Committee was apprised of the high degree of cooperation that exists among various participants in the area of operation, as well as with other peacekeeping operations in the region. This includes coordination of mine action activities in the mission area undertaken by the Mine Action Coordination Centre, which is funded in part from the Mission's budget (a provision of $1,364,000 for

that purpose was requested for 2004/05) and administered by UNOPS under the overall direction and guidance of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. MONUC provides assistance to ONUB in air operations and by making available to ONUB its level III and IV medical facilities and providing some specialized expertise in communications and logistics. **The Committee welcomes this cooperation. The next performance report should include details of this cooperation, including the financial impact.**

2. Civilian personnel

14. The estimated requirements of $53,929,100 under civilian personnel provide for salary and common staff costs of 403 international staff, 423 national staff and 172 United Nations Volunteers. The estimates reflect a vacancy rate of 20 per cent in respect of international staff, 10 per cent in respect of national staff and 5 per cent in respect of United Nations Volunteers. **The Committee questions whether the assumption of deployment used in the budget estimates is realistic, given the latest deployment data shown in paragraph 4 above. In view of the obvious delays in deployment, the Committee recommends that the delayed deployment factor be adjusted to a more realistic rate of 25 per cent for international staff, 15 per cent for national staff and 10 per cent for United Nations Volunteers.**

15. **The Advisory Committee is particularly concerned about the slow pace of recruitment of national staff, where the vacancy rate as of 28 September 2004 was 64.5 per cent. The Committee expects that urgent measures will be taken to reduce the vacancy rate of national staff. The Committee also encourages greater use of national staff, where possible, as has been requested by the Committee (see A/58/809, para. 8) and the General Assembly in the past (see resolution 58/312).**

Structure of the Operation

16. The Advisory Committee had an exchange of views with representatives of the Secretary-General on what appears to be the application of a model structure with certain commonalities for current and future missions. The Committee discusses this matter in paragraphs 17 to 26 of its report on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) (A/59/390).

17. The Committee's comments and observations on the proposed structure of MINUSTAH also apply to a large extent to the proposed structure of ONUB. These comments and observations, when applicable, are included for easy reference in the present report on ONUB.

18. **The Committee appreciates the work that has been done so far, but it is of the opinion that the concerns indicated in its report on MINUSTAH have not been fully addressed, particularly with regard to the need to avoid fragmentation, to establish clear lines of authority and to avoid the potential for grade inflation**. In this connection, the Advisory Committee recalls that the post of Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, was originally proposed at the D-2 level for ONUB (see A/58/802, para. 5).

19. The Committee notes that while the organizational chart of ONUB lists disarmament, demobilization and reintegration activities under the Principal Deputy

Special Representative of the Secretary-General for governance and stabilization, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration activities performed by MINUSTAH are the responsibility of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for humanitarian and development coordination.

20. The Committee notes that there is direct reporting to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General by certain units, such as those of legal affairs, public information and communications and political affairs in this Mission, as well as in UNMIL, MONUC and United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). The Committee was assured that this responds to lessons learned and reflects direct support to some of the functions of the Special Representatives of these multidimensional missions. **The Committee cautions, however, against a tendency to replicate functions of the Operation itself in the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General or the Deputy Special Representatives of the Secretary-General. The aim should be to increase efficiency and accountability and to improve management; it should not result in an increase in the number of posts or the grade level of the posts identified either in the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General or in other units.**

Recommendations on posts

21. **In view of the paragraphs above, and taking into account what has been stated by the Committee in paragraphs 17 to 26 of its report on MINUSTAH (A/59/390), the Advisory Committee makes the following recommendations for adjustments regarding the staffing establishment in ONUB:**

In the Office of the Special Representative: (i) the post of the Director proposed at the D-1 level, should be at the P-5 level; (ii) the Committee does not see the need for a Political Affairs Officer (P-4) in view of the proximity of the Political Affairs Office to the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General; (iii) the Committee does not see the need for a Protocol Officer (P-3), whose functions should be absorbed by other staff of the Office;

In the Office of the Principal Deputy Special Representative (Governance and Stabilization): for the reasons given in paragraph 18 above, one P-4 (Political Affairs Officer) and one international General Service (Administrative Assistant) post should be abolished to avoid duplication of functions;

In the Office of the Deputy Special Representative (Humanitarian and Development Coordination): (i) the level of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General should be set at the D-2 level; (ii) one P-4 post should be eliminated to avoid duplication of coordination and liaison functions;

Both the Office of the Legal Adviser and the Communications and Public Information Office should be headed at the P-5 instead of the D-1 level, in view of the available support from headquarters. Consequently, the D-1 posts should be downgraded to the P-5 level. The head of the Communications and Public Information Office could also perform the functions of spokesperson.

These recommendations are made on the understanding that the staffing of ONUB would be revisited in the next budget for ONUB, in the light of further experience. The impact of the recommendations on the budget would be a reduction of $489,700.

3. Operational costs

Official travel

22. The estimate for official travel for 2004/05, as shown in section II.A. of the proposed budget, amounts to $1,685,400. This amount comprises a provision of $362,600 for training-related travel and $1,322,800 for other official travel. Having reviewed additional information provided to it, the Committee finds that the Operation is proposing an excessive number of visits, by both mission and headquarters staff, as well as an excessive number of travel days. For example, the Operation is planning two visits of 10 days each to attend budget review meetings at Headquarters in New York, while such meetings are usually conducted for two or three days each. Furthermore, the Operation is proposing $60,000 to conduct 60 within-mission area trips of five days each, i.e. a total of 300 days will be spent on such trips. **The Committee, while not recommending specific reductions in travel estimates, expects that the performance report for the period 2004/05 will reflect savings achieved under travel of staff.**

Facilities and infrastructure

23. A provision of $2,869,400 is requested for rental of offices for the advance and permanent mission headquarters, field sites for troop deployments, logistics base warehouse complex, transit camp, airport, etc. The Committee was informed during its hearings that the status of forces agreement had not yet been yet finalized. **The Committee expects that the Operation will sign the agreement on conditions favourable to ONUB, which should, inter alia, contribute to reductions in rental costs. The next budget submission should contain information to this effect.**

24. The Committee notes from the information provided to it that the Mission proposes to rent 67 photocopiers and 100 combo copier/fax machines at an estimated cost of $657,200. Taking into account its observation on the need to avoid the fragmentation of units (see para. 18 above), as well as the fact that the mission controls its operations from four buildings in Bujumbura and its five regional offices, the Advisory Committee is of the view that the rental of equipment should be reduced. **The Committee, while not recommending specific reductions in rental of equipment, expects that the performance report for the period 2004/05 will reflect savings achieved due to the Committee's observation.**

Ground transportation

25. The requirements of $16,623,500 under ground transportation would provide for the operation and maintenance of a fleet of 570 United Nations-owned vehicles, 636 contingent-owned vehicles, 45 contingent-armoured personnel carriers and 265 contingent trailers. The total requirements of $16,623,500 include an amount of $7,543,300 for the replacement cost of 102 4x4 general purpose vehicles, 36 light and medium-sized buses, 7 vans, 4 engineering and material-handling vehicles, 30 trucks and 38 vehicle attachments for trailers, to be transferred from the strategic

deployment stocks at the United Nations Logistics Base. It also includes a provision for spare parts ($537,700). The Committee notes from the information provided to it that requirements for spare parts are estimated in respect of ONUB at the rate of $50 to $200 per vehicle less than one year old (depending on the size) and at the rate of $175 to $750 per vehicle more than one year old. The Committee recalls that in MINUSTAH, the requirements for spare parts for vehicles are estimated at a standard rate of 5 per cent. **In view of the different approach in estimating requirements for spare parts for vehicles for peacekeeping operations, the Committee requests that the Secretary-General review the methodologies used and apply the one that would more precisely reflect the necessary requirements.**

26. An estimated provision of $350,000 is requested for rental of vehicles pending delivery of United Nations-owned vehicles and equipment. The Committee notes from the information provided to it that this provision reflects high rental rates, for example, an hourly rate of $150 for heavy buses and $375 for cranes and a weekly rate of $1,000 for medium/heavy trucks. **The Advisory Committee requests that the delivery of the United Nations-owned vehicles and equipment be expedited and that, in the meantime, the Operation review its arrangements for rental of vehicles with a view to reducing rental costs. The outcome of the review should be reflected in the next budget submission.**

Communications and information technology

27. **The Advisory Committee cautions that, when planning its acquisition of computers, vehicles and other equipment, the Operation should take into account the established standard ratios, as well as the incumbency situation and the actual pace of mission deployment. Moreover, the Committee recommends that requests for resources for communications, information technology, and facilities and infrastructure include a time frame for the completion of projects, and that the status of implementation of tasks performed be reflected in the performance reports (see also A/57/772, para. 102).**

Other supplies, services and equipment

28. The estimated requirements under this heading include a provision of $36,000 to cover the cost of official functions held by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General at a monthly cost of $3,000. The Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that funds for official functions are included in all peacekeeping operations, for example, MONUC spent $25,200, UNMIL $24,200 and the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) $24,800 from their budgets for such functions. The Committee notes that while some missions budget for official functions on the basis of a one-time provision, other missions, including ONUB, propose monthly hospitality requirements. **The Advisory Committee is not convinced that the latter approach is justified, given that expenditures for hospitality are not borne evenly throughout the budget year; this requirement should not be perceived as a hospitality allowance. The Committee requests that the Secretariat look into this matter and come up with a uniform presentation of hospitality requirements, which should be based on a consistent and transparent policy. In the meantime, the Advisory Committee finds the estimates for official functions for ONUB too high and recommends a reduction of $12,000.**

29. **The Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the provision of $132,200 for ration pack reserves and bottled water reserves budgeted under other supplies, services and equipment would be reduced to $119,300, a reduction of $12,900, to reflect a revised cost of bottled water ($1.49 per bottle instead of $2.55 used in the budget estimates).**

Electoral assistance

30. The Security Council, in its resolution 1545 (2004), authorized ONUB "to contribute to the successful completion of the electoral process stipulated in the Arusha Agreement, by ensuring a secure environment for free, transparent and peaceful elections to take place" and decided that ONUB should provide advice and assistance to the transitional Government and authorities to contribute to their efforts "to proceed with electoral activities". The Advisory Committee notes that the Electoral Assistance Office is responsible for such tasks, thus contributing to expected accomplishment 1.2 and supporting the related outputs in component 1 of the results-based framework of ONUB. The proposed staffing resources of the Office include 125 staff (16 international, 74 national and 35 United Nations Volunteers). In addition, the mission proposes to hire six international consultants for a total of six work-months at an estimated cost of $125,300 ($54,000 for consultancy fees, $37,800 for travel and $33,500 for subsistence allowance). The consultants will provide expertise mainly in the form of detailed designs, procedures and draft legislation to be implemented or made operational by the staff of the mission's electoral component.

31. The Committee was informed that although the Secretary-General's report to the Security Council (S/2004/682) indicated 31 October 2004 as the date for elections, the electoral process would start as soon as the electoral law had been enacted by the National Assembly and the required funding had been fully provided. The Committee was also informed that as at the time of its consideration of the budget submission for ONUB, a contribution by UNDP of $1 million had been received towards the elections budget of $21 million to be funded through voluntary contributions.

Quick-impact projects

32. The estimated requirements of $1 million are included for quick-impact projects broadly described in paragraph 101 of the budget submission. The Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the Operation had not started any such projects and was in the process of identifying areas in which quick-impact projects would be implemented during the budget period. **In this connection, the Committee stresses the importance of starting quick-impact projects at the early stages of mission deployment and trusts that the administration will take urgent steps to expedite the planning and implementation of these projects.**

IV. Conclusions of the Advisory Committee

33. The action to be taken by the General Assembly in connection with the financing of ONUB for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005 is indicated in paragraph 102 of the proposed budget (A/59/300). **In view of its comments above,**

the Advisory Committee recommends that the estimated budget requirements be reduced from $333,174,000 to $329,714,400.

Documentation

- Budget for the United Nations Operation in Burundi for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005 (A/59/300)
- Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the interim budget for the United Nations Operation in Burundi for the period from 21 April 2004 to 31 December 2004 (A/58/811)
- Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the interim budgets for UNMISET for the period from 1 July to 31 December 2004 and MINUSTAH for the period from 1 May to 31 December 2004 (A/58/809)
- General Assembly resolution 58/312 of 30 July 2004 on the financing of ONUB
- First report of the Secretary-General on ONUB (S/2004/682)
- Security Council resolution 1545 (2004) of 21 May 2004